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Brotherhood Comes First!

BY ROBERT A. ASHWORTH

If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Matthew 5:23, 24.

IS man ever better engaged than in the worship of God? "There is no other form of human endeavor," writes Professor Henry Nelson Wieman, "by which so much can be accomplished." "Worship," says a distinguished psychologist, "is like a breathing spell in a long and arduous foot race, or the hour of roll call in a prolonged and hard-fought battle. . . . It is indeed so important that one finds one's self sometimes wondering how any of us can afford to do anything but educate ourselves in this art."

We may be sure that Jesus did not minimize the importance of worship. He came of a people who had developed the art of worship to such a high degree that we naturally borrow the very phrases in which they expressed their reverence and adoration. "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord, our maker."

The picture which the text suggests, therefore, is an impressive one: "Thou art offering thy gift at the altar." In this solemn act man reaches his highest estate. Before the altar he has commerce with God. It is fit that he should demean himself reverently. Other occupations and interests must be set aside and his attention focused upon the symbolic rite by which he testifies to his devotion. Reverence demands that the act thus initiated shall be completed in due order. There is nothing so important as properly to interpret it. Man is here engaged in a primary duty.

So, I think, we should be disposed to say, and Christian practice through the centuries would support us; but Jesus would not say so. Essential as is worship to

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the religious life, a duty we owe both to ourselves and to God, Jesus declares that there is something more essential still. "If thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift at the altar, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Human relations are of first importance. If it is a question between expressing your devotion to God and putting yourself right with your fellow man, God can wait.

When we get the full import of this, it is startling indeed. It sets in bold relief the blunder into which subjective interpretations of religion are forever betraying us. The two elements which are involved in religion, we are constantly assured, are God and the soul, the soul and God. Jesus denies that: there is a third element, "thy brother." Ritualism, with its forms and ceremonies, would say, "First offer thy gift, then be reconciled to thy brother." If we follow the spiritual insight of Jesus we must conclude that you can offer no gift to God that will be acceptable so long as you are at odds with your brother. Right human relations are fundamental to right relations to God, and they take the precedence. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen."

In this view Jesus was in the succession of the noblest prophets of his own people. "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me . . . when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

A CHALLENGE TO CONSCIENCE

It looks as though we are in danger of approaching the whole matter of religion from the wrong end. *First —then!* What do we put *first,* and what *then?* That is the most searching question that can be put to the Christian world in our generation.

This is a challenge to the Christian conscience. Man's inhumanity to man constitutes a virtual denial of human brotherhood and blocks the approach to God. We cannot list here the occasions of complaint on the part of his fellows which one might easily recall as he stands before the altar to offer his gift. For a world in which are such extremes of poverty and wealth, where opportunity is so unevenly divided, a world of special privilege, a world in which so large a fraction of the population is refused the right to work, reduced to the dole and thereby robbed of self-respect, every worshiper must accept his due share of responsibility. How can we fail to remember what our brother has against us when we come to offer our gift to God?

We are invited by the National Conference of Jews and Christians to observe Sunday, February 24, as Brotherhood day. We are asked upon that day as we assemble to worship to remember particularly our mutual relations within the commonwealth as members of different races or adherents of different religious faiths. Has our brother aught against us? Racial and religious intolerance is the most serious menace of our day. There are tendencies at work in the world so divisive and disruptive, setting race against race and religion against religion, as to threaten the very existence of civilization. How can we lift up our hands in worship of the common Father of mankind if we forget the resentment that burns in the hearts of our brothers of religious and racial minorities who believe themselves to be objects of discrimination and injustice?

THE HAVOC OF INTOLERANCE

What havoc racial intolerance may work in the destruction of human values and the creation of human misery, we see in Germany today. There a fresh attempt is being made to do what Burke long ago declared to be impossible—to draw up an indictment against an entire people. Insult, exploitation and impoverishment, virtual banishment and even torture and death have been visited upon the Jews on the transparent subterfuge of a fantastic theory of "Aryan superiority." But we do not need to look beyond the boundaries of our own land for illustrations of the same nature. When we stand before the altar let us remember what our Negro brother has against us, with our American record of slavery, economic exploitation, segregation, social ostracism and the vile crime of lynching. So far as the relations of Protestant to Catholic and Jew are concerned, we have little to be proud of in America. In colonial days religious liberty was a rare phenomenon; political discrimination on religious grounds and persecution of religious minorities was the rule. In later times both racial and religious intolerance have played their part in the successive movements that have swept across the country, sowing the seeds of suspicion and hatred, dividing our citizenry into hostile camps and leaving ruin in their wake—the Know-Nothings of the 1850's, the Ku-Klux Klan of the 60's, the A.P.A. of the closing years of the century, the revived Klan of the present century and the variously colored shirts of more recent times. This is a dismal heritage and we have not lived it down. Everywhere are scattered embers of anti-semitism and anti-Catholicism which need only a favorable occasion, or the breeze of some selfish interest, to fan them into flame. It is no accident that these recurring outbreaks of racial and religious animosities have coincided with periods of financial and industrial depression. These prejudicial movements, it must not be forgotten, are the sins of Protestantism, which has always constituted the religious majority in this country and in whose hands, therefore, has rested the power to persecute.

Protestantism, therefore, has something to remember when it offers its gift at the altar. When we stand to worship and there recall what other members of God's family have against us, let us dismiss our church services, postpone the singing of hymns, leave the table of communion, set aside our vain oblations and seek out our brethren to make it right with them. "First be reconciled to thy brother, then come and offer thy gift." It is a hard and a searching word, but it is inexorable.

When we turn from the altar to inquire what our brother has against us we shall meet the charge of misunderstanding and misjudgment. Have we taken the

trouble to understand our Roman Catholic brethren? Ancient and deeply imbedded prejudices, imported from the old world, the products of conflicts in centuries long past, have sown suspicions that have embittered the relations of Catholic and Protestant in America since colonial days. It is time that these should be brought to the surface, defined and re-examined, that it may be determined what elements of present truth or falsehood they contain. We have a destiny to work out in our own country that must not be hindered by these cluttering survivals from the past. Are Protestants better citizens and more patriotic than Catholics? Do American Catholics plot to dominate the government,

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and if they should dominate it, would they deliver it to the pope? Are Catholics hostile to the public school, and is the parochial school a menace to our institutions? Do Catholics deny the Christian character of Protestants and consign them to perdition?

Let us inquire what Catholics themselves have to say on such suggestions of distrust as these and when they have spoken let us believe them. Wholesome relations between groups, as between individuals, are utterly dependent upon mutual confidence. Unless you are willing to credit your brother with the same degree of sincerity that you claim for yourself, community life is impossible.

Have we taken the trouble to understand our Jewish brethren? Upon what is the current anti-semitism based, upon facts or upon some form of self-interest? From what are current ascriptions of inferiority to the Jews derived, from the facts or from economic fear? On what grounds is discrimination of many sorts practiced against them? Do Jews dominate industry and threaten the economic security of other groups? Are Jews less honest or honorable in their business dealings than those of other groups? What are the facts?

It is our duty to understand our brethren lest we misjudge them. We must determine to understand. Ignorance is no excuse for the prejudice of which our brethren complain. When we bring our gift to the altar we can forget any wrong that our neighbor may have done to us but we must remember the wrong we have done to our brethren. Have you despised your brother, or maligned or ill-treated or exploited him or withheld your sympathy from him?

Understanding begets new attitudes. *Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner.* To understand is often to exchange contempt for deep respect. "I hate that man," said Charles Lamb to a friend, of one who was passing by. "Why, Charles, I didn't know that you even knew the man." "I don't," stuttered Lamb, as his manner was when moved, "If I knew him, I couldn't hate him." If you could put yourself in your brother's place, whether he be Catholic or Jew, and discover how he "got that way," if you felt the pressure of his spiritual tradition, caught the radiance of his ideals as he sees them, and the warmth of his faith, and weighed the influence that limit him and hold him back; if you knew his reasons for the practices that seem strange to you, you could not hate him.

TOWARD A WHOLESOME COMMUNITY LIFE

Every man desires to be judged in terms of his best rather than of his worst traits and achievements and that he should be so judged is his right. This is true also of a group. I should be sorry if Protestants were judged by some Protestants I have known. Doubtless Catholics and Jews share this unwillingness to be judged in terms of their failures. It may be that Jews would like to be judged in terms of an Einstein, Catholics in terms of a Cardinal Faulhauber, and Protestants in terms of an Albert Schweitzer. In each case this is their right. There are rascals among the Jews, hypocrites among Catholics and cheats among Protestants, but it cannot be said that Jews are rascals, or Catholics hypocrites, or Protestants cheats.

Every man has a right to be judged in terms of his worth as an individual regardless of his race, faith or color. Nothing has wrought more havoc in human relations than the fatal habit of loose generalization. The Jews are thus and so; the Catholics do this and that; the Protestants think so and so! This is a fertile source of injustice to the individual and if you are guilty of it he may properly hold it against you when you take your gift to the altar.

So long as your brother has aught against you and you are not reconciled to him you are not only derelict in your duty to God, but you fail in your duty to society. These grievances, in other words, these misunderstandings and misjudgments on the part of members of one group with respect to those of another, are a principal hindrance to the creation and perpetuity of a wholesome community life. They are the sources of the tensions and competitions that tend to break society apart into factions or hostile camps.

Here we are, Protestant, Catholic and Jew, citizens of the one country, bound up in one bundle of life, our

political and economic fortunes irrevocably joined. It is imperative that we should learn to live together with mutual consideration and respect.

It is improbable that we shall ever see eye to eye on some matters, and our distinctive principles may seem to each of us of the most urgent importance. Where we differ in matters of religious conviction it is inevitable that each group should think itself to be right and all others to be wrong. But each may grant to the other the credit of sincerity. We cannot renounce the right to share with our brethren our deepest spiritual convictions and our richest spiritual gifts and this will not threaten our mutual relations provided, first, that we offer no bribes to those who will agree with us, and inflict no penalties upon those who disagree, and, second, that we be as willing to learn from our fellows as we are to teach them. Truth no doubt is a unit, and those who differ from one another cannot all be right. Nevertheless, when all is said, it is unlikely, in the lifetime of any now living, that all will think alike. Jew, Catholic and Protestant will dwell side by side in our common country for generations to come. It is imperative that we should learn the difficult but necessary art of living together.

COMMON IDEALS

To this end we must learn to cooperate. In some realms cooperation is impossible. Let us be realistic and face facts. Not all groups can at present worship together, serious as may seem this penalty of our differences. The loosening and lessening of religious conviction necessary to avoid it would be too high a price to pay. But there are broad realms of common concern and interest in which all groups may work together. Catholic, Protestant and Jew believe in the same God. All believe in a spiritual interpretation of life and in those spiritual realities that must undergird our industrial and national progress, and face together the threat of materialism and the rejection of all religious values. The ideals of justice and mercy belong to all. The prophets of Israel are a common heritage. Each group believes in the social implications of the faith it professes.

In these realms they may unite and as they draw together in common tasks, this new fellowship will promote friendship and understanding. "As I walked one day in the mountains," says a legend in the Talmud, "I saw at a distance what I took to be a beast. As I drew nearer, I saw it was a man. As I came nearer still, I discovered that it was my brother."

As a matter of fact, we Americans are living today in a land with many other self-conscious culture-groups, and the sooner we recognize it and accommodate ourselves to it, the better it will be for us. We must make America safe for differences. These three major groups, Protestant, Catholic and Jew—to mention no others—are destined, under the providence of God, to dwell side by side and to share together the resources and opportunities that America provides. In mutual forbearance and respect, and in as full cooperation as is possible with fidelity to convictions that are precious, each may make a rich contribution to the common life. Growing in mutual sympathy and esteem, each group may help the others to achieve their best estate, and each vie with others in the service of humanity.

We talk much of a renaissance of religion and many pray for it. If it is to come, it must begin here. We cannot be at odds with one another and at one with God. Communion with man is a prerequisite of communion with God. Whether, therefore, it be Protestant, Catholic or Jew that is offering his gift at the altar, if he remembers there that his brother hath aught against him, let him leave there his gift before the altar, first he reconciled to his brother, and then come and offer his gift.

'Yes, I Believe'

By Allan Knight Chalmers

A New Year's Sermon

A POSITIVE assertion of faith is not easy today. Men have lost something through the sickness of the world which is not easy to replace. The historic result of suffering and distress, of difficulty and danger—that men's hearts turn back thereby to God, that their minds begin to revisit the ancient faith—is not true today.

Perhaps we do an injustice to the past in making too simple a characterization of it. Perhaps it may be well to recall that story of two people who were talking about old times, and one said to the other, "Things aren't what they used to be."

"No," replied the second one sadly, "and they never were."

It is possibly quite true that in the days of the 107th Psalm—do you remember, "Hungry and thirsty their souls fainted in them, then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and he delivered them out of their distresses"?—the primary motive for man's turning to God was adversity. Having been saved from his troubles, prosperity returning, he then turned from God again. Finding men forgetting him, God brought them low, and then, again, comes the refrain: "Hungry and thirsty their souls fainted in them, then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and he delivered them out of their distresses." Over and over again you get that refrain as the explanation of the attitude of man in relationship with God.

In those days, too, there were probably those who were ready to curse God and die, rather than turn to him. When, therefore, we cling to a judgment about trends of thought which is merely a proverbial judgment, we may be fooling ourselves. Yet it does seem today that we are not moving as by an irresistible and almost automatic reaction back toward God, as they were said to do in other difficult times.

ARE MEN TURNING TO RELIGION?

It is becoming almost as useful a conversational gambit as the weather is, for men who find themselves unexpectedly talking with a strange minister and don't know quite what to say to him, for them to ask him, "Do you think that people's minds are turning to religion in these days of depression?" Their way of ask-

ing it implies a doubt, and it is most interesting to see their expression, almost of relief, when the reply is made, "No, I don't think so, and I'm glad of it."

They have thought that men ought to be thinking about religion and have been a little alarmed that they were not doing it. They usually look a little relieved, somewhat doubtful, and ordinarily hopeful, as they ask, "Why are you glad?" Then we have a chance to talk about a childish, mama-I've-hurt-my-finger-religion which was all right for the childhood of man in his relationship with the Supreme Being, but is a cry-baby attitude for those attempting to live as maturing and at least partially understanding sons and daughters of an intelligent God.

One of the truly hopeful signs, therefore, in our present day complexity is that, while man is doing some thinking about religion today, he is determined not to turn to God just because he has burned his finger. He may never go back to the old days of carelessness about God, for which we may be duly thankful, but he is coming to God today, if he comes at all, in pursuit of objective truth, not because of his selfish desires, or his own personal distress.

A DIFFICULT TIME, BUT HOPEFUL

So often in these days, as my confidence in man is being renewed by watching his high courage in facing the storm, I have thought of the attitude of Jim Heritage in the book, "The Uncertain Trumpet." He and his friend Bill Venture—both somewhat wild in their past, but true friends, nevertheless, within their light—are off on a yachting trip, and Bill, who cannot swim, falls overboard in the night. Jim, with a cry, plunges after him. The confused crew throw out buoys, but the flares do not work and in the darkness the ship cannot find them. They cling to the grating that they have found, and yell at first, as they watch the light circling farther and farther away. Their voices are still at last as they realize they cannot be heard. It is getting colder and their legs are growing numb.

"Bill," said Jim, "I guess we're booked through this time."

"Yes," said Bill, "and no return tickets."

There is a silence.

"Jim," said Bill suddenly, "pretty rotten to start praying now, would you say, when we're up against it?"

"Yes, pretty rotten, Bill. Best go through as we've run."

Again a silence. They are getting utterly weary.

"Jim!"—A little cry of realization as Bill finds that he can hold on no longer.

"Bill," cries Jim, and then again, "Bill!" He clutches for him once—again—and the ceaseless waves are empty but for a piece of grating.

Don't you like that? Man *is* thinking about God in these days but he is not going to cheapen God by coming to him simply because he is tortured by distress and fear.

People sometimes say today that this time affords a great opportunity for religion. As a matter of honest fact, however, it is an extremely difficult time for a religious approach to the meaning of life. There is plenty of evidence, of course, that men are still selfish, unreasoning, and childish in their hopes and fears, their hurts and faiths, in their motives for turning to God. But there is also enough evidence to give man courage to believe that there is something to this dream that man has in himself the possibilities of living with calmness and understanding as a child of God.

We are in days of difficulty now because man is trying to be honest with himself and to do honor to God by not acting in a sniveling fashion in his bewilderment. The great opportunity for religion will come when, with the pressure of his fears removed, we shall see whether religion has anything to offer man as a lasting faith and a compelling goal of endeavor.

WHAT DO WE BELIEVE?

There is something very important, however, that is left for us to be greatly concerned about, those of us whose interest in man's search for understanding finds itself held by the life and teaching of the Christ. This is, that we must ask ourselves what our positive faith is.

There is enough negative emphasis in the world; necessary negativism, some of it; useful negativism, most of it. It is easier, of course, to tell what you do not believe. There are some things that all of us know positively, and those things are negative. We do not believe, for example, in the God of the Israelites who smote the Caananites for the advantage of his "chosen people." We do not believe in the God of the writer of the imprecatory Psalm, much as we may in our weakness sometimes sympathize with the writer's exasperation at his oppressors. We do not believe in the God of the Tower of Babel who, fearing man's increasing power, smote him with the affliction of the divisiveness of many tongues, so that men sought to kill each other as the soldiers of the dragon's teeth did in their silly combat, while God, like Jason, looks on complacently. We do not believe in the God of Cain who saddled man's spirit with the necessity of interminable labor; compelling him to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow so that his evil energy might be dulled; making man so tired that he cannot fulfill his evil desires.

These things we take as examples of the way in which we narrow our belief until we can come out with the positive that remains. Let us ask ourselves whether, in facing a new year, we can say, "Yes, I believe," and start our year with our heads up and our spirits high.

Three things, nay four, we shall have time to speak of this morning, and those without much elaboration. We do not ask you to agree with these convictions, but would like for you to ask yourselves what positive things you do believe in these fields.

BELIEF IN MAN

What do you believe about man? Those of you who recently sent to me the lists of ten or a dozen experiences which give you lasting satisfaction, had a high conception of man. "Yes," you said, in implication; "Yes," you said, with a sense of uplift in it; "Yes, I believe in man;—that he is good in his satisfying moments."

We were not talking of that "realistic" attitude of man which holds that we know that he is not good and

that his life does not satisfy. We were talking about those qualities in man which live up to the idea that we have of him. We said, by implication: "I believe the nature of the world is upon the side of goodness, that that is its meaning, its purpose. Man is free to choose, but when he chooses the evil life he finds that it leads to chaos, misery and death. Life is truly itself only when man is good."

In his book, "Greenland by the Polar Sea," Rasmussen tells of a guide named Odaq who was one of the group of Eskimos with Peary in his unsuccessful attempt to reach the North Pole in 1906. Camped on the ice at the "farthest north" yet reached by man, the Eskimos saw only death ahead; and they did not know that Peary, asleep in his tent, had accepted defeat for the time and would begin the return march the next day. Odaq pitied his friends; and he realized how the loss of these hunters would afflict their small tribal community, which was dependent on its hunters for food. He went into the commander's tent, woke him, and said:

"I have come to speak to you for my comrades' sakes. Further progress now would mean death for all of us, and I know you will not turn. Send my comrades back. With the aid of the compass they will be able to find land. I will go on with you, so that you need not die alone."

This man is not a "civilized" hero. Odaq is an Eskimo, one of those people popularly supposed to be crude savages, foolishly eager for beads, gaping at the strange and imposing white man as if he were a god! His action and his words show us a human being (we can no longer say a savage) with the psychological insight to perceive that a man may be done to death in the grip of his own will, and with too deep a compassion for the will-driven man to let him "die alone" in his folly.

In this attitude of a primitive man we do find a thrill in the very heart of our being. Here is one who has no training by the mores of his particular culture. Here is a man who has not been influenced by all the religious propaganda. Here is a man who has given to us a satisfying picture of how man reacts to something outside his own selfish interests.

All kinds of negatives would be present if we tried to talk about what man is like, and we ought, of course, to look realistically at him. But here is the *idea* of man, and in that idea we can say, "Yes, I believe."

I BELIEVE IN GOD

We can say, "I believe in God."

"To explain him is beyond my present capacity," man says. That does not mean that he will not try. Our belief in God must be just as reasonable, just as intelligent, as we can make it. Most of us, however, do recognize the truth in a French philosopher's play upon words: *"Le Dieu defini est le Dieu fini,"* which cannot be translated in the same vivid form when we take it into the English language, but which has a meaning it is well for us all to recognize: "The God defined is the God finished," or perhaps to translate the spirit rather than the letter: "God, analyzed, is God dead."

Our young men's club has been struggling—and struggling is the word—with the impossibility of squeezing even an inkling of God into our finite minds. We do not say of God, any more than we would of man, that he does not exist. We see that there is in man something that we call his personality. We do not deny the fact that this entity exists. But what is it? we ask.

Similarly, you see, we are saying not that God does not exist, but, existing, what is he? Why is it that we cannot catch, through the senses by which we catch other things, even the hem of his flying garments, to take a picture of Browning?

We are having to leave here the least common de-

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nominator for a moment. This is not a composite picture of our common mind. Neither is it something to be argued against. It is rather a statement of the power by which one man lives that a man can say, "Yes, I believe that the power behind this universe, the great first cause, the unifying principle, the unconditioned reality, the infinite, ineffable absolute, the authentic existent, is at least as personal as ourselves and cares about man—about men—about me."

Prove it, the world says. But one cannot. We do not mean that this is an unbased faith. We mean that we have as much right to believe it as a scientist has to believe in an electron, which he has never seen. We believe it is possible to test this belief in the phenomena of life, and even as we see in man the evidence of an attunement with the meaning of man in the good life, so we find that to take Jesus' revelation of God as the explanation of the possible relationship that man has with the power in the universe we call God, explains, as no other belief quite does explain, certain things that we see in our world.

We see men acting on the belief that God does not care, that man is on the earth to "get his," that life is but a struggle for self-existence on the plane of an educated animal. We see the results of man's living upon that belief. From the kind of men it makes, from the world it produces, we conclude that the hypothesis is not correct. Life is terror in the dark when men live only for themselves, and terror in the dark is not life, it is death.

We see man acting on the belief that God does care, that what he gets on this earth or any other is not important, that life seems right and true when a man gives up his life for his friend. Something in the heart of man responds to that sort of living.

There is something in the heart of man that bursts the bonds of a coldly impersonal universe and makes him dare to live as the son of God. "It does not yet appear what we shall be," but we are not afraid. We go forth willing to try to match our lives to his high vision in whose name we pray.

LOYALTY TO CHRIST

This brings us, then, to Christ. Can we say in these days, "Yes, I believe in Christ"? Someday, perhaps, when we have nothing better to do and lots of time on our hands, we may feel it worth while to try to explain him in all his intricate theological possibilities, to plot him out in concentric and overlapping circles in his relationship with the Infinite. That is not what men need today. We must ask ourselves whether or not we believe that he is the way, the truth and the life, the life that lighteth every man, the light that cannot be blotted out by the darkness. Does he give to man a leadership in attitude and spirit? Can we be loyal to his revelation of the divine in God and in man?

"Oh," some wise ones say when you speak this way, "then you believe in the lower conception of Christ?" I know what you mean but will not argue with you upon that plane.

Let me ask you just one question. You say, "This is the lower conception of Christ." Does that mean that you are above him? Lower? Does that mean that you have left him behind in the spiritual heights that you have attained? Lower? It is high enough for any man to devote all the energies of his life to living in this world worthy of being called Christ's friend.

BELIEF IN TRUTH

Can we say, finally, "Yes, I believe that there is Truth, a truth which all men will someday know, a truth about man and God which Christ made man to see about God and about man"? It is not an easy faith to hold.

Realism, on the one hand, so often denies it. Idealism, on the other hand, so often compels such a way of life that men would willingly reject it. It must be given substance so that doubting Thomases will say, "My Lord and my God," and the bitter opponent, Saul, shall become the burning apostle, Paul.

This is the message for the new year. Let us live the most positive thing that we can glimpse. Let us make our mistakes, if need be, even as the scientist does, following out blind alley after blind alley until at last we discover the way. Let us take a phrase of Tillich. We do not want a belief which is made up only of idealism because that becomes soft and sickly sentimentalism. We do not want realism untouched by belief, for that is hopeless and unreal pessimism. We must have an attitude of *"Belief-full Realism."* "Cleaving ever to the sunnier side of doubt, and clinging to faith beyond the forms of faith," can we go out to face this world in which we are, saying that we believe that there is a meaning and a purpose to our existence?

It's a big year, with the words impossible, impassible, impenetrable, as key words to our mood. It will not be an easy year. But we can say with conviction, "Yes, I believe."

There shall come from out this noise of strife and groaning
A broader and a juster brotherhood. A deep equality of aim
Postponing all selfish seeking to the common good.
There shall come a time when each shall to the other
Be as Christ would have him, brother unto brother.

Open Doors

By Charles S. Heimsath

I am the door. John 10:9.

MOST of you have seen the gray stone mansions on Fifth Avenue with their windows closed, shutters drawn, and doors fast locked. They seem to be trying to shut out the life that surges in front of them and that threatens to engulf them. Not long ago an old lady died in one of these close shut houses on Fifth Avenue. She possessed great wealth and left much of it to the church and to charity, but we are sure she was not happy. She was the last of a line of brothers and sisters who had pledged themselves not to marry so that none should ever share their fortune nor invade their privacy.

Sometimes I have seen houses in New York and in Chicago with the doors and windows actually boarded up. Of course there is no life in these houses. No one can live behind sealed doors and windows. When habitation begins, the doors and windows are opened to the air and sunlight. The better a house is lived in, the more frequently its doors and windows are opened.

Dr. William Pierson Merrill, of New York city, divides men into two great classes, those who build walls and those who destroy them. The same generalization could be made with regard to doors. There are those who close doors and those who open them. Christians are, on the whole, arrayed on the side of those who break down walls and who open doors. As we attain the higher levels of life we open more and more doors. We can almost estimate the level of life on which a man is living by the number of doors he has open. Education, music, sports, art, good will, religion are all of them expansive. The higher activities of the human spirit bring release and fulness. As Christians it is clearly our duty to open all the doors we can.

Let us give thought to the doors of our personalities that we may open them to more abundant life, and the doors of our churches that we may swing them wide to

a more genuine Christian achievement in behalf of all humanity.

I

Sitting on an all-canvas-and-steel porch chair on the terrace before an all-steel-and-composition house at the Century of Progress, I meditated upon the stout, frame, Victorian houses that my father, a building contractor, used to construct in good, permanent, German fashion. What would he have thought of this square, flat-roofed, hard-surfaced dwelling with its corner windows and its rubber floors? Here was a visible demonstration of the distance we have traveled in the building of houses since I was a boy.

Then I meditated upon the changes that have come in our thinking generally since my father's day. If we could demonstrate it as concretely, we would discover that modern ways of thinking differ from ways of thinking a generation ago as radically and strikingly as the modernistic house differs from the bungalow.

In another house at the Fair I discovered a young couple discussing the domestic possibilities of an aluminum mantelpiece. They fitted into their surroundings; this was their house. I am not sure that I could have lived in it with entire satisfaction, but they could. Then I meditated further upon this new world of thought in which these young people are finding themselves at home. The Century of Progress dramatized the advances that have been made in mechanical science and in industry. I wish it could have made clear how far we have come in our thinking these one hundred years. We are living in a new world of ideas. It belongs neither to youth nor to age, but to him who opens the doors of his mind.

Dorothy Canfield Fisher has a book with the title, "Learn or Perish," in which she makes clear the necessity of adult mental growth. Teachers are in the profession of *conveying* ideas, but even teachers as a group are generally not much interested in *securing* new ideas except as they will help them in their work. Most adults desire to grow mentally only to improve their efficiency in their professions, in business, or in homemaking. Few as yet open the doors of their minds to save their souls. Few as yet grow intellectually because they wish to keep on living intellectually and not to stagnate. *Learn or perish!* That is the alternative we face in this new world of ideas.

Mrs. Fisher goes on to say a hopeful word. Our Victorian grandmothers and grandfathers knew little of sports. Fresh air, sun-bathing, golf were comparatively unknown to them. Physically they became fat and flabby. Then in this busy world of ours it became a matter of sports or perish. Now it is hardly respectable for a business man to be white and flabby. He has a narrow waistline and an expensive tan. Mrs. Fisher says that it is becoming hardly more respectable for a business man to have a fatty mind than to have a fatty body.

Our gospel of industriousness left us little time or strength for thought. Hard work has been our god and Ben Franklin was its prophet. We can hear Poor Richard saying to us: "Remember, children, time is money. Remember the busy bee. Remember the industrious ant. Remember the sound of your hammer at six in the morning or at eight at night heard by a creditor makes him easy six months longer." "The devil has work for idle hands to do." We have learned well the gospel of work. But in doing so we have impoverished our minds and starved our souls. Says Paul Hutchinson: "Successful people of the old regime have been waking up in our recent cold, gray dawns to a realization that they have been so absorbed in the pursuit of money that they have missed almost everything else in life."

I noted conspicuous changes in the architecture of the new houses at the Century of Progress that are symbolic of the changes that are taking place in our spiritual life. There is enlarged window space, which means letting in more light and air. Living rooms have also increased in size and in comfortableness while the remainder of the house has decreased proportionately. Chairs have become more usable and book space has increased. Even in some of the smaller houses there is, in addition to the living room, a reception room or game room. And every house has a flat roof or upper terrace where the family can enjoy the air and sunlight. On one of these terraces there are shuffle-boards and sand-boxes and easy chairs. All this indicates that we are building houses to play in, to grow socially in, to develop intellectually and spiritually in. We are making provision in our new homes for a fulness of life we never dreamed of a generation ago.

We are beginning to make tangible provision for the ideal of spiritual growth expressed in "The Chambered Nautilus:"

> Build thee more stately mansions,
> Oh my soul,
> As the swift seasons roll.
> Leave thy low-vaulted past,
> Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
> Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
> Till thou at length art free,
> Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea.

II

I well remember a sermon Dr. John M. Moore preached several years ago called "Altars That Are Too Small." In it he showed how we have built churches and constructed forms of worship that are too narrow to admit the world. Though we protest loudly that we wish to win the world to Christ, we made no provision for the fulfillment of this purpose. Those who think the way we think, live the life we live, believe the things we believe, and look pretty much the way we look are welcome to our churches. If the people we invite to our churches should ever actually come, we would have a terrible scare. There would be publicans and sinners, harlots, bar-tenders, communists and fascists, soldiers and sailors, intellectuals and poets, priests and scribes and prophets! If all these people should appear among us sober and respectable Christians, we would have a frightful case of indigestion. And yet Christ, whom we claim to follow, companioned with people like these. And the good and godly people of his generation accused him for it.

We have closed so many of our doors to sick people, sinners, black people, laboring classes, social outcasts,

that we may seriously question whether the church has either the inclination or the ability to save the world.

We have never sensed the full import of our Lord's words, "I came not to bring righteousness, but sinners to repentance." "They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick."

Our denominational gatherings reveal the narrowness of our altars and the tightness of our doors. We are forever patting each other on the back, repeating all the slogans and shibboleths we have in common, planning ways to increase the number of those who believe, and act, and look the way we do. Imagine asking a Hindu, a communist, a Catholic, a federated labor

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leader, a Japanese, an American Indian, and a Christian Scientist to state his case honestly before any of our national Protestant assemblies! But we do not meet in denominational gatherings to seek new ideas, but to keep old ideas going.

There are whole areas of life which we do not seriously attempt to touch with our Christian message. Some of them are vital areas—economics and government. Only at one point in the last one hundred years has the Protestant church made a determined effort to change the government, and that is in regard to the liquor question. The church has had no militant and concerted program that has touched child labor, prostitution, minimum wages and working hours, housing conditions, the protection of investors, militarism. And yet these are problems vital to the life and happiness of ordinary men and women. Men do not live by bread alone, but they do live by bread. Today we are passing resolutions at our national assemblies that bear on such matters and these are all helpful and exceedingly worth while. Sooner or later we shall actually open the doors of our churches to those wide areas in which the welfare of our people is determined.

Our churches have only recently opened their doors to the full and healthy expression of the life of their members. The churches were at one time closed to everything except Sunday school and church worship. Gradually church houses were built to provide more and more abundantly for the life of the individual. Dinners, sewing circles, entertainments first came under the church house roof. Then followed drama and sports, and later, in some churches, games and dances. More and more in the church the individual is finding full and healthy expression for his life. And we are only beginning to discover ways by which we may find in religion and in the church the fulfillment of the abundant life Jesus promised.

In the First Presbyterian church of Stanford, Connecticut, the pastor fitted up his basement so that unemployed factory workers under competent leadership could build hand-made period furniture. In the churches of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, a Handel chorus has been formed to give oratorios at Easter each year. At Bloomington, Illinois, a group of church people give the passion play annually. In the Riverside Church of New York there are Sunday and week-day groups for parents, drama groups, choruses, social service groups making over clothes for the unemployed. The First Methodist Church of Evanston, Illinois, has transformed its prayer meeting service into a church night at which intent groups pursue, with conspicuous success, courses in current events, drama, history of art, religion of the Old and New Testaments, religious education, photography, music, and other subjects.

HOW TO OPEN DOORS

How can we grow spiritually? How can we open doors to a fuller and richer life? We have discovered a thousand ways to imprison life; let us learn a few ways to release it.

We can continue to learn. We have the vague notion that in school we finished with this burdensome process. Few of us ever do try systematically to learn after we leave college. We are still using the old ideas we learned in our economics and government courses, and many more ideas are still stored away dusty and unused in the attics of our minds. Adults can learn just as quickly as youths. We can keep open the door of study.

We can acquire new skills. Because we are forty or fifty or sixty does not mean that we cannot acquire a new skill. We can begin learning to swing a golf club, or to finger a piano, or to handle a weaving machine, or to model with clay. I met a friend who was on the point of leaving for a summer camp in Minnesota. He beamed when he told me he was taking his old fiddle and expected to spend some of his vacation hours practicing.

We can seek truth through discussion. The discussion method is characteristic of the present. Formerly we laid down ultimatums; now we call economic conferences. The discussion method is valuable if we know how to discuss—that is, if we have open minds and are willing to join in the common pursuit of truth. But if we are waiting for someone to show us the

answer in the back of the book, we are not ready to use the discussion method.

We can test the vitality of our religious habits. The danger is that religious habits become empty and formal. Do our prayers feed the soul? Do we read the Scriptures vitally? Does our life possess Christlike qualities? Is our service socially profitable? Are we religiously merely passive and receptive? Religion should be our chief means of enlarging and enriching our life. Christ said, "I am the door." We have thought of Christ as a Good Shepherd, Elder Brother, Son of Man, Son of God, Savior of the World, but we have seldom thought of him as the Door. "I am the Door." He leads us into life. "I came that they might have life and have it more abundantly." Most people think of religion as a wall which shuts out the fuller resources of life; it is in truth a door by which we enter the abundant life.

Knees that Have Not Bowed to Baal

A Jewish New Year Sermon

By Beryl D. Cohon

Yet will I leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal and every mouth which hath not kissed the idol. 1 Kings 19:18.

"O LORD, touch thou my lips, and let my mouth speak thy praise." This little prayer, spoken by our fathers at the most solemn part of their devotions, when they felt themselves in the presence of the Holy One, comes to mind at this moment and presses for expression. No one who is aware of the solemn responsibility that rests upon him in speaking from a synagogue pulpit on Rosh Hashanah, particularly this year when the world is adrift in a sea of moral anarchy and every man's life is bewildered and harassed, no one who would speak and remain true to his charge as being, for the moment at least, the articulate conscience of the Jew can escape the feeling of inadequacy. He cannot help but feel with Jeremiah, "Ah, Lord God, I cannot speak, for I am only a child."

For the burden of these *yamim nora'im* is, in the language of the synagogue, *heshban hanefesh*—self-analysis, self-criticism. The Days of Awe require us to detach ourselves from the immediate and the worldly, put aside as of little consequence our successes and our failures and take counsel with the still, small voice within us. They ask us to brush aside the trivial, shut out the clamor of the world, pull off the mask life slips over us, and look into ourselves, bravely, clearly, seeing ourselves as we really are—not merely as we would like to have the world think we are. We must pronounce honest judgment upon ourselves in the sanctity of the secret places of our hearts. That is what the fathers meant when they spoke of *heshban hanefesh;* that is what this day requires of us, and that is the most salutary experience that can come to us.

And when we do lift ourselves above the immediate and the noisy and take a larger view of all that is happening round about us, the reality of this day strikes us with peculiar power. Then it is a day of awe, indeed. Awe implies wonder, mystery, fear, a sense of helplessness in the presence of inexorable forces. Who, viewing the turbid ebb and flow of human miseries and the clash of human passions of our day, will not experience a sense of awe? Do not the words of Matthew Arnold, spoken in a much calmer age than ours, apply to our day with peculiar aptness:

> . . . for the world, which seems
> To lie before us like a land of dreams,
> So various, so beautiful, so new,
> Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
> Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
> And we are here as on a darkling plain
> Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
> Where ignorant armies clash by night.

What I am anxious to do this morning, my friends, in order to make the meaning of this day real and its message vital, is to point out the havoc that is created in our own lives and in the lives of nations, more particularly in the life of our own Jewish people, by the mad idolatries of our day. The words of Hosea have become universally true. "Ephraim is wedded to idols," complained this prophet some twenty-six hundred years ago. Today the whole world is wedded to idols; the moral life of man is prostituted by a pernicious idolatry. I should like to speak of at least two idols—cruel, beastly *baalim*—that have perverted the minds and blunted the consciences of nations setting people against people, group against group, degrading our arts and our sciences, corrupting our philosophies and our religions.

EXAGGERATED NATIONALISM

One of the idols of our day is exaggerated, chauvinistic nationalism. This spurious nationalism, inflated by demagogues preying upon the miseries of the masses, is corrupting every aspect of our lives. It is the rampant Moloch of our day.

We need not engage in any nice definitions of nationalism this morning; this is not the time nor the place for academic niceties. We know what is meant by nationalism. We know that there is a wholesome, unifying nationalism emerging from the group life of a people, and we know that there is a degenerated, incendiary nationalism that is nothing more than tribalism. It is this tribalism that is ravaging our world today. Professor Carleton J. H. Hayes, a distinguished American historian, in his book, "Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism," says: "Modern nationalism signifies a more or less purposeful effort to revive primitive tribalism on an enlarged and more artificial scale."

We know what this tribalism is doing to us. It has built walls and fortifications around every country; it has released fear and fostered hatred; it has disrupted our commerce and corrupted our culture. It has dragged one of the highly civilized countries into the jungle and gives us a horrid spectacle of the degeneration of a once great people. We see a once cultured people exiling or assassinating her scholars, her thinkers, her scientists, her artists. "Art cannot be tolerated in the absolute sense in which liberal democracy understands it," one of her leaders, high in authority, declares shamelessly before

all the world. Another says: "The age of pure reason and of unprejudiced, free science is over." Still another broadcasts to all the world: "The dictum, 'Let justice prevail though the heavens fall,' is an exaggerated, obsolete notion." That is, the very groundwork of the moral life is "an exaggerated, obsolete notion"! Describing a religious service in Berlin, an American correspondent reports: "The hymns were sung to the martial blaring of bugles and trumpets of storm troops' brass bands."

That is what extreme nationalism does to us. It regiments the arts and the sciences; it turns education into propaganda; it degrades philosophy and religion and makes it march to the commands of the top-sergeant.

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Life is cheap in the hands of this type of nationalism. The individual has no will, no personality, no rights, no liberties; he is a soldier in the ranks—in the ranks of evil. The state is the supreme Moloch. The methods of this type of nationalism are lying propaganda, repression, violence, terror. One could collect an extensive library of books dealing with the philosophies and techniques of terror that have come out of Russia, Italy, Austria, Germany. Behind these books stalks not only an intense human tragedy but also moral nihilism.

RACIALISM IS UNREASONABLE

Chauvinistic nationalism has driven from the world all those larger liberties which mankind has wrested from the tyrants at the cost of blood and tears. It has driven from the world what have come to be accepted as inalienable human rights—freedom of conscience, freedom of thought, freedom of expression. Exaggerated nationalism is an incendiary force. It splits up mankind into hostile camps; it releases the winds of hate and unleashes all the hounds of reaction.

A brood of evils trails this perverted nationalism. Like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, nationalism has called out all the rats from all the gutters of the world. Plagues and chaos follow in their path. Chief among them is racialism. Racialism is another idol before which most of us bow our heads and bend our knees. It is one of the evil ideologies invoked by chauvinistic nationalism. Racialism is a moral evil. It is a sin. It has no basis in reason. It is not grounded in fact. It thrives on hate and breeds madness.

What is this racialism of which we hear so much? Laws are enacted, philosophies are reformulated, religions are reinterpreted, literature, art, even science—yes, even science, even such a science as mathematics—are recreated; reasonably harmonious group relationships are disrupted and social strife engendered in the name of this baal, racialism. What is this racialism?

In its final analysis it is nothing more than a combination of rank superstition and demagogy. Two notions weave its pattern. Both are completely false. One is the notion that certain groups of mankind constitute pure stock biologically. They have come cleaner from the hands of the Creator than have other peoples and have preserved their pristine purity. The second notion is that this pure group is divinely endowed with certain virtues. There is more heroism in the blood of these people, more wisdom in their brains, more courage in their hearts. Therefore this pure race must rule the inferior races—rule by divine right because of divine endowment.

JEWISH CHAUVINISM

This philosophy with all its incredible nonsense is the intellectual basis of racialism, be it in Germany or anywhere else. Extreme racialism mans just that. We see it at work in Germany on just such a basis. Listen to the words of its high priest: "The Aryan is the Prometheus of humanity, from whose light-bearing forehead the godlike spark of genius has sprung at all times, ever lighting new fires to illuminate the night of hidden secrets and thus showing the way which leads to the rule of all other peoples."

We need not enlarge upon this concept of racialism. We should not desecrate this holy day by dwelling too long on it. We know it by its fruits. We Jews know it too well, alas! But please remember, my friends, that this racial madness is not confined to Germany. There we see it in its acute stage; in its incipient stage we see it at our own doors. Racialism is at work in our American life. It is a potent and subversive force in our Jewish life.

It is amazing, incredible, but true, nevertheless, that this double evil of belligerent nationalism and insane racialism that has disrupted the moral life of mankind and which has inflicted such a terrific toll upon Jewish life has been enthroned in our own Jewish household. We have taken those very forces of reaction against which we have been complaining so loudly and have exalted them as our supreme Jewish ideals. Incredible, but true! We protest against German racialism and at the same time extol Jewish racialism. We point with horror to chauvinism among the nations and at the same time are breeding chauvinism within our Jewish camp.

Racialism and nationalism are the idols around which many of our people are dancing with enthusiasm, as did our erring fathers around the golden calf, and are chanting as did they: "This is thy God, O Israel!" These are our gods—racialism and nationalism! Too many of our supposed Jewish leaders are whipping the crowds into frenzy over their new idols; too many blind leaders are leading the blind. The true, the historic, the abiding, that which has ennobled our fathers and consecrated them as the religious idealists among the nationals is brushed aside as obsolete.

Why do we succumb to this folly? There are, no doubt, good reasons for it. Perhaps the major explanation is this: we see our enemies strong and victorious; seeking to defend ourselves against them, we instinctively resort to those very same weapons that seem to have made them powerful. Thus, since our enemies are belligerent nationalists, since they are racial egotists, we turn racial egotists. Chauvinism thus begets chauvinism and racialism inspires racialism. But while this may explain, it does not justify. My friends, to weave our cultural patterns and shape our religious loyalties on the basis of race is to release degeneration in our camps. It is to foster reaction. We have a much sounder foundation. Our chief cornerstone is that heritage, that religious discipline that spells Judaism as a religion. It is the synagogue and the synagogue alone that gives moral warrant to our separatism.

JUDAISM NO LONGER PROPHETIC

If belligerent nationalism is an evil in German life, it is fully as much an evil in Jewish life; if Aryanism is bloated egotism, Semitism is no less racial egotism. We cannot fight evil with evil nor lies with lies. We Jews ought to be superior morally to the anti-Semite. That, in the end, is our supreme advantage, but we surrender this advantage when we stoop to his mentality. Then we become only small imitations of our enemies. And that, morally, is the lowest depth to which we can sink.

And we ought to remember the honest facts in this matter of racialism; we ought to remember that we Jews no more represent a pure race than the so-called Aryans do. Semitism, like Aryanism, is nonsense; we Jews are no more Semites than the Germans are Aryans. We Jews hold in our veins the blood of every people with whom we have come into contact in the course of our migrations.

Judaism has ceased being a religion demanding personal moral discipline and has become a political "ism" in the lives of great numbers of our people. We Jews have ceased being a religious community and have become a racial entity. Accordingly, the voices that are most incessant in Israel today are not the voices of the prophets pleading for the will of God in the life of man and society—the will of the righteous God of all nations in the lives of all men and all nations—but the voices of clamoring nationalism and racial egotism. Ephraim is wedded to idols once again. Like Saul among the prophets, we are in danger of going mad with a lying spirit.

Our Jewish life is corrupted by this idolatry. Much is heard today of "Judaism as a civilization." At bottom this is an attempt to evade Judaism as a religion. Synagogue after synagogue throughout the land have been degraded into mere sounding-boards for all the inflammatory catch-phrases of blatant nationalism and racialism. From our Jewish press, platform, and pulpit alike comes the cry for "national Jewish solidarity." Our bureaus of Jewish education throughout the country have, for the most part, converted their schools into centers of nationalistic propaganda. Read the writings of these supposedly Jewish educators, supported by the Jewish community in good faith, and you are quickly impressed with the studied, anti-religious emphasis. Our Jewish press is forever stimulating our racial conceit.

My friends, I need not tell you that I too am anxious for Jewish unity, but our Jewish unity must not be regimented and it must not rest upon secular nationalism. If we Jews constitute a nation, we are a nation only in terms of Torah. Our Jewish unity must come from our common love for our heritage, from our consecration to the voices of Israel's seers, sages, prophets, psalmists. We may differ among ourselves as to the methods by which this love and consecration may be implemented in our lives, but these are the ties that unite us—divine ties! I need not tell you that I too believe with all my heart in the synagogue and the Jewish school; but the synagogue is the house of God and the Jewish school is the house of Torah. I need not tell you that I too believe in Jewish culture; but Jewish culture is something infinitely more than ghetto dances, ghetto mannerisms, outlandish habits, and foreign tastes. Our Jewish culture is in terms of Moses and Isaiah and Hillel and Maimondes, that is, in terms of learning, moral passion, social idealism, and personal integrity—not in terms of trivial customs picked up by our fathers in the villages of Europe in the course of their wanderings.

KNEES WHICH HAVE NOT BOWED

In these Days of Awe when we are assembled in our synagogues in worship, we should examine critically our own Jewish household and rid ourselves of the false gods. This is a time to reassert those values by which Israel has lived and which hold the only promise we have of a life worthy of our prophetic heritage.

Perhaps you remember the story of Elijah the Tishbite, who has become such an engaging personality in Jewish history. Like ourselves, Elijah lived in difficult times. His people succumbed to the idolatries round about them; that which had distinguished Israel had been forgotten. Elijah went up and down the land seeking to rebuild "the altar of the Lord which had collapsed." He was persecuted. His life was in danger. He had given battle to the false prophets, had triumphed, but succumbed to despair. He sought asylum in a lonely cave in the sacred mountain of Horeb. There came to him that experience which transformed and reconsecrated him as the champion of the Lord and sent him back into the field to carry on his labors. Note the words of encouragement he heard God whisper to him: "Yet will I leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal and every mouth which hath not kissed the idol."

In our own day too there are left a number of those

whose knees have not bent to the Baal of nationalism and racialism. There are liberal spirits that have maintained their integrity even in these idolatrous days; there are the *haside umos haolom,* the righteous among all the nations and peoples. There are these seven thousand clean souls. Not all the world has been nazified; not all minds have been stampeded into nationalistic and racial belligerency; not all consciences have been regimented. The forces that unite, ennoble and redeem from folly are still alive in the world. Shall we not align ourselves with those movements that tend to unite rather than with those that tend to divide? Shall we not join these righteous few? Shall we not join all liberal forces? Shall we not remain among those who refuse to bend their knees to Baal and whose lips refuse to kiss the loathsome idol? And shall we not hold our schools and our synagogues true to their charge of bringing light to a people walking in darkness?

"Yet will I leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal and every mouth which hath not kissed the idol." God grant us the strength of heart and mind to be among these seven thousand.

The Unavoidable God

By Frank Fitt

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. Psalm 139:7-10.

THERE are two impressions which come to us with even the most casual reading of these verses. First of all we gain the impression that the man who wrote them had thought about life intensely, not merely as a philosopher who meditates, but also as a participant who acts and feels. The man who gave us these phrases had lived very fully, had known the ups and downs of experience and was sufficiently mature in what he had thought and done to be ready to make up his mind on the main things. He is no mere novice expressing himself. Nor is he a veteran who has laid down his weapons. We feel that he is actively in the fight and that he has had a many-sided acquaintance with life. He knows its good side and its bad side. He has caught its comedy and tragedy. That is the first impression. And the second impression is this, that the author of these words has come to some final and satisfying conclusions about life and that he has set his course according to these conclusions without any reservations whatsoever. He has gathered all his energies, all the revealing expressions of himself, into a consistent unity. The result of his intensity of living is that he is moving steadily in a certain direction and that nothing will deflect him from his path. I do not think I am finding more than is warranted in these verses when I claim that they tell us that their author has drunk deep of the cup of life and that he has made up his mind on its most important phases.

Whenever we come across testimony of this sort, words which reveal much of their author's depth and thoroughness, it is always worth pondering over. We encounter so much of the immediate, the transient and the superficial in our average day that we simply dare not disregard the chance to ponder upon something that deals with ideas touching the universal and eternal. And so, if we can—and I admit it is quite an effort in these days—let us divest ourselves for the time being of the more pressing of our own concerns, the worry that haunts us, the care that travels with us day and night, and let us consider this man who, in his own way and in his own day, may have gone through very much the same windswept passage as that in which we find ourselves.

THE DIVINE ALWAYS PRESENT

In the words of his psalm this man tells us that he has come to two conclusions: first, that we can never get outside the range of God's presence—up or down, on land or sea, we can never rid ourselves of the divine—and, second, that we can always count on God's helpfulness—"even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." To put it as briefly as possible, this man has reached the conviction that God is unavoidable not merely as Creative Power, but as a Friend. It is the latter that matters most. Something brought this universe into being. Something started this huge, immeasurable enterprise upon the way. Something originated the long process of the ages that carries us to this present hour. How can anyone deny God as Creative Power? But to read into that Creative Power the warm, human touch—well, that takes a greater faith, does it not? But if the Creative Power is also the Friend we can march with a surer tread.

Let us illustrate this for ourselves in terms of two poems. Here is the opening stanza of Joseph Addison's familiar paraphrase of the Nineteenth Psalm.

> The spacious firmament on high,
> With all the blue ethereal sky,
> And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
> Their great Original proclaim.
> The unwearied sun, from day to day,
> Does his Creator's power display,
> And publishes to every land
> The work of an Almighty Hand.

The words reflect the majesty and dignity of the natural order. But the whole process might be impersonal, blind, deaf and dumb so far as human need was concerned. Orderly, yes; unfailing, yes; dependable, yes; but only as the machine is orderly and unfailing and dependable. God is Creative Power.

Here is another poem that goes further in its assurance. Joseph M. Plunkett is the author. He reads into the world of nature as he observes it, his own faith in God as a Friend. As we read his lines we can sense the depth and intensity of the author's searching and finding.

> I see His blood upon the rose
> And in the stars the glory of His eyes,

His body gleams amid eternal snows
His tears fall from the skies.

I see His face in every flower;
The thunder and the surging of the winds
Are but His voice—and carven by His power
Rocks are but His written words.

All pathways by His feet are worn,
His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea,
His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn
His cross is every tree.

The man who wrote those lines believed in the Divine Friend. "Blood," "the glory of His eyes," "tears," "face," "voice," "strong heart," "crown of thorns," "cross"—those are the key-words that reveal his conviction that at the very last God can share and understand and help in all that makes for the warm, dear, precious things of life.

GOD IS THE GREAT FRIEND

Now the psalmist has this second note as well as the first. He finds God not merely as Creative Power, but as Friend. I wonder if we can realize the daring trust and faith of this declaration at the time he made it. It was long before Christ came to set the seal of his own Saviorhood upon the wonderings of the choicest spirits of the centuries that had fled past. It was many generations before the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews could begin his message with these tremendous words: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Without anything more to guide him than his observation of the ways of men and the ways of himself and the sight of nature as it was unfolded in the pastoral simplicity of the Syrian landscape, the psalmist came to the conclusion that God was one who heard and helped and understood.

Whenever I turn to these Old Testament passages which reflect the heights of man's spiritual vision, I cannot help asking myself if we could have shared those heights at the time. Christ had not yet come to live and die and rise again and to unfold the message that even now is beyond the capacity of our understanding. Could any of us have achieved the psalmist's level in his own day? After all, it is an academic question. There is another which presses upon us far more definitely. Can we rise to the level of the psalmist's faith now as it has been illustrated and confirmed a thousandfold by the New Testament story? Can we express our faith in God as Friend in the fashion of Christ's interpretation? The whole meaning and challenge of our Christian faith can be found in the psalmist's words as they have been intensified by Christ. One can easily believe in a Power behind the maze and mass of the universe. It takes imagination and faith and a daring thrust of all that we have and are to go forward in the conviction that this Power is one of Fatherhood and that in the ordinary and extraordinary phases of life, in times of storm as well as times of quiet, we are never outside the reach of his arm or beyond the confines of his love. Yet this is our heritage in Christ.

There are some people who have been spared the wrestle of faith. The background of their home was so genuinely Christian that from the earliest days of childhood the God to whom they said their prayers was always the God who cared. There have been shocks and surprises, of course. Difficulties and temptations have crossed their path. And sin has left its scar upon them as upon all of us. But there has never been the necessity of a fight for faith, no walking along the unlighted way. There are other people—and I take it there are some represented in this congregation—who have had to fight hard for their faith, to carry on a ceaseless battle to establish themselves truly in the Christian company. It is only with the utmost vigilance upon themselves that they have kept steadily in one path. Perhaps more than they realize they are winning the victory; but too many times their battle seems a losing one. And there are still other people—and I take it that they, too, are represented here—who have suddenly, at a time of crisis, perhaps, or it may be in the quiet growth of the years, come into the fulness of the recognition of the love of God. All in a moment, as it were, there has dawned upon them for the first time the fact of a Father whom they have never seen, but of whose presence and power they are sure. And so we come by various routes and strange stopping-places to the full vision of the God which the psalmist declared so long ago.

Frank Fitt

Recently I heard how this renewal of self in terms of God came to a young man of my acquaintance. He was brought up in a Christian home, nurtured in surroundings calculated to develop his best, went to college, married, became the father of two children and entered upon a promising business career. During all this time his faith was largely a matter of inheritance. Then the storm came and the winds blew and the underpinnings

of his structure gave way. There was no disgrace involved. It was simply that the economic dislocation which has made such a difference to many also made a difference to him. Probably no one will ever know just what went through his mind. Probably the young man does not know himself. But, as his friend put it when telling me the story, he "got religion." The faith that was merely inherited has now become truly his own. It has meant a new spirit, a new determination, a new way of dealing with life. How did he get it? Why did he get it? Do not ask me. I am simply reporting the story as it came to me. All I can say is that the grace of God works mysteriously, but effectively, and that many a man before this man has found life made over in terms of a deeper realization of God.

A MAN CREATED ANEW

It does not require any great degree of insight to be convinced that many people, young and old and middle-aged, are probably passing through similar spiritual enlargements in these days. There are certain types of leadership which can become effective only in times of crisis and I believe there are certain phases of spiritual vision and realization which are vouchsafed only in such conditions as are now upon us. If we are not aware of this and if we do not feel ourselves part of the process we are simply asleep and not awake. As the language of the Book of Common Prayer puts it so quaintly, "there is no health in us." The only healthy phase now is the phase in which we make sure that, all the way around, night and day, in the home and at the place of toil, in hours of effort and of relaxation, we have found and are faithful towards the possibilities of the Friendly God whom Christ revealed. And if that phase truly is our phase we know what it means, a strange mixture of shame and confidence, of defeat and victory, of concern and assurance. Above all it means growth; for even one year ago we were not as we are now. And as we look back farther it seems as if almost a series of lifetimes had passed since the years when there were so few answers to be received because there were so few questions to be asked. Were those earlier years happier? No: not if we are more closely linked with God now.

Probably the surest ground of our confidence at this time lies in the certainty that all over our land and every other land where the gospel has been proclaimed there are men and women who are coming now as never before to a more complete appropriation of God as the Friend of mankind. They have learned, as Francis Thompson did, that he is an unavoidable God and that even when we seek to escape from him his love pursues us.

> Halts by me that footfall;
> Is my gloom, after all,
> Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?
> "Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
> I am He Whom thou seekest!
> Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me."

No matter how far we may have gone we must reckon with him who will never desert us. And in this realization, and the obligations which it brings with it of our own best efforts for ourselves and for all others, there is hope for our future. If we were without God we might justly fear. If we can be with God we shall not fail. No mere readjustment economically—though that is necessary—will restore our peace and security as individuals and nations. We require the cleansing and directing vision of God as the one who seeks to express our good through our own consecrated efforts.

Accompanied as these days are with strain and suffering and when many are carrying burdens that would have overcome them in easier days it is significant, surely, that the dominant note is that at the end of the day we shall not be defeated. We may not express it; but we feel it. Underneath the surface that is so tumultuous we know there are depths of faith and power and good intentions that shall prevail. There is a reason for that. It is because in our best moments we know that the psalmist was uttering the truth when he declared that God was not alone Creative Power, but Friend.

Trumpets in the Morning

By David A. MacLennan

Set the trumpet to thy mouth. Hosea 8:1a.

An old Jewish legend tells of the rememberable answer given by Satan to a questioner who sought to discover what it was that the ruler of the realm of darkness had missed most since he had fallen from his high estate in heaven. "I miss most of all," he said, "the trumpets that are sounded every morning." In the long night of our disenchantment we have learned what that means. Wearied of the wails emitted by the battered pipes of Pan; surfeited with the saxophones of superficiality and cynicism; jarred by the jangling brasses of our subsidized bands, we desire to hear once again the triumphant tones of God's own trumpet. As the mother in Noel Coward's play, "Calvacade," puts it: "Something seems to have gone from out of all of us." Aye, something high, holy and adventurous too long silenced by the cacophany of the world "seems to have gone from out of all of us." Nevertheless, it is not hopeless; the first, fine careless rapture of marching to glorious music can be recaptured. If only the watchmen upon the walls of the city will put the trumpet to their lips, and in no uncertain voice rally us, we shall regain the rhythm of a marching faith.

> Trumpeter, sound for the splendor of God!
> Sound the music whose name is law,
> Whose service is perfect freedom still,
> The order august that rules the stars!
> Bid the anarchs of night withdraw,
> Too long the destroyers have worked their will.
> Sound for the last, the last of the wars!
> Sound for the heights our fathers trod
> When truth was truth and love was love,
> With a hell beneath, but a heaven above,
> Trumpeter, rally us, rally us, rally us,
> On to the city of God!

It was that demand which Hosea voiced imperiously. "Set the trumpet to thy mouth!" urged the Eternal Spirit through his prophet. In that far-off broken period in Israel's history, the nation was perishing for the lack of trumpets in the morning. "It was indeed a thick night into which this Arthur of Israel stepped from his shattered home," wrote Sir George Adam Smith. "The mists drive across Hosea's long agony with his people, and what we see, we see blurred and broken. There is tumbling and clashing; crowds in drift; confused rallies; gangs of assassins breaking across the highways; doors opening upon lurid interiors of drunken riot. Voices, which other voices mock, cry for a dawn that never comes. . . . Only one clear note breaks over the confusion—the trumpet sounding to war." The description so aptly fits the contemporary scene that one hesitates to do more than mention it. Certainly mists drive across our horizon until even the presiding genius of a great national banking system declares the gloom impenetrable. There is tumbling and clashing, not only of the old and new standards in morals, but of privileged groups with the "dispossessed." Gangs of assassins have disfigured the highways of our own nation and of every nation, on this continent under the banner of rugged individualism, and elsewhere under the flag of nationalism. In a pitiful attempt to drown out the ominous thunder of threatening storms, some of us have resorted to the desperate expedient of opening doors that invalids of a sick society may enter within "lurid interiors" to drug their bodies and souls.

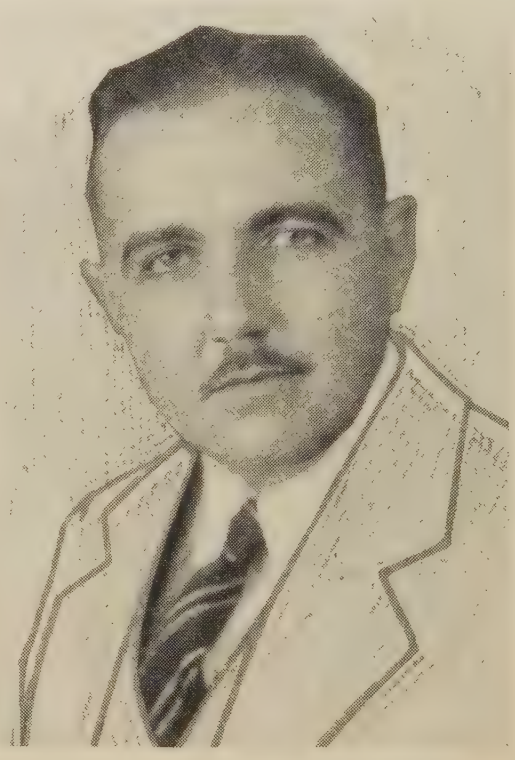
Consider, however, the last part of our interpreter's picture: is it true that with us as with ancient Israel, "one clear note" breaks over our confusion? Despite much to dismay, and dark facts to be faced, we believe that it is true; at least that it can be true. From many a lonely tower prophetic souls are setting the trumpets to their lips, summoning our laggard feet to crusade on behalf of a more Christlike order of life. If only the army of the Lord's people, which is his church, will learn to hear and heed we shall make "one music as before, but vaster." Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that all the prophets were trumpeters, sounding such a clarion call as to compel us to abandon our dugouts of fear and tradition. Then would we march, not "over the hills and far away," but into the immediate area of our modern life where even now we have the available knowledge and potential skills to build the city of God.

I.

Victories of music have been won before, and can be won again, but only if the music of victory is played faithfully. What are some of the notes which distinguish "the trumpets that are sounded in the morning"? The prophets, who are as competent music-teachers as any, would agree that the first note sounded must be one calling to repentance.

When Arthur John Gossip included in his now classic volume a sermon "On the Revival of Some Obsolete Notes in Worship," he declared that this was the first of all authentic notes to be recovered. Hosea sounded this note with clarity and constancy. The people must leave their unholy and artificial politics and worship and attend to the building of character. Only citizens strengthened inwardly by purity and integrity could withstand the eagle-like assaults of the enemy. In the reconstruction of man or nation the prophet knew that repentance was the first step. "Lift up your voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions and Israel their sins," cried Isaiah with equal severity.

Rarely has the church failed to obey that injunction in respect to conventional, personal sins. Too often she has been silent upon those more heinous sins of social attitude and action which sent our Lord to the cross, and humanity in these latter years to its own Golgotha. We must play the entire score of the Lord's song in a



David A. MacLennan

strange land. "No serious call can ever be made which does not begin with the demand that men must everywhere and always adjust their minds to reality, and this is an essential part of what is meant by repentance." Thus Edward Shillito writes in his searching analysis of "Nationalism: Man's Other Religion." "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." When our Lord uttered that hard saying, no one present thought it resembled a flute-like warble; it was then, as it remains today, an unequivocal trumpet call.

Dr. Shillito has emphasized the fact that this moral realism is demanded in every realm by the master thinkers of mankind. In science, as in ethics and religion, we must be ready at any cost to revise our estimates of truth in the light of new facts. To ignore this call, to fail to make such adjustment to reality as is required to master a new situation, is to be cast out among dead things. The tragedy of history lies in the assumption of multitudes in every generation that as things have been, so they shall remain "world without end." Their favorite music consists of slumber-songs, and when "the

dawn comes up like thunder" their dreams are rudely interrupted by the inexorable demands of a new day which they are unprepared to meet. Upon them, to use a phrase of Halford Luccock, falls "the curse of the mentally deaf."

In Bruce Lockhart's recently published "Memoirs of a British Agent," there is a dramatic account of the last tsar's exemplication of this vicious attitude, or tragic deficiency. Members of the British embassy made earnest efforts to avert the final catastrophe which overtook the old regime, by attempting to warn the tsar of the necessity of making swift and complete adjustment of his government's policies to the facts in the case. Sir George Buchanan, the ambassador, made one last visit in the hope that Nicholas might listen to the warning trumpets and repent. "I saw him just before he went to see the tsar," writes Lockhart. "He informed me that if the emperor received him sitting down all would be well. The tsar received him standing." He was too busy with irrelevant details to spare an hour for conversation concerning the life and destiny of himself and of the country he loved so blindly. The wistful violins and tinkling triangles of the palace orchestra were much more soothing to the ear than a strident trumpet. Let Dr. Luccock put it succinctly for us and for our civilization: "Our only hope of salvation, socially, is in the increase in the number of open ears, alert to catch the cries of anguish and suffering."

One rejoices that calls to social repentance are being sounded by statesmen and prophets. God grant that we may make such adjustment to the facts in our new world situation as may prevent the doom which overtook Hosea's generation! In one of his broadcast messages of his first year, President Roosevelt discarded the piccolo reputed to be favored by politicians, for a stout trumpet more suited to a fearless statesman. "We cannot ballyhoo ourselves back to prosperity. I am going to be honest at all times with the people of the country. . . . I do not want the people to believe that because of unjustified optimism we can resume the ruinous practice of increasing our crop output and our factory output in the hope that a kind Providence will find buyers at high prices. Such a course may bring us immediate and false prosperity, but it will be the kind of prosperity that will lead us into another tailspin." The healthy attitude evinced in such words presaged a return to sanity if not to immediate prosperity. "We cannot ballyhoo ourselves back to prosperity." And let the prophet add, "nor to righteousness." "Set the trumpet to thy mouth" that we may repent.

II.

One may be sure that the trumpets heralding a new day never lingered on the note of repentance save as a prelude to rallying the forces for an intelligent and purposeful advance. "Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward." Without forward movement life ceases to be life. Stagnation is intolerable. That is why hell is hell: it is an eternity of ennui, the endless repetition of the same old hopeless business. Lucifer might well sigh for that other country in which every day was a fresh beginning, shot through with "the glory of action, the splendor of beauty." The New Testament does not speak of "five-year plans," but through its pages march men and women with a sense of direction and who are armed with a plan which one day, by

A Pastoral Prayer

By Charles W. Gilkey

'O LIFE that maketh all things new,
The blooming earth, the thoughts of men!
Our pilgrim feet, wet with thy dew,
In gladness hither turn again.'

We bless Thee for all evidences, beneath the crusted surface of things, that Thou art indeed working to make all things new, in the world about us, in the life of our changing time, and within our own hearts. We thank Thee for the seeds of the new year's early planting and later harvest, already gathered safe beyond the reach of the old year's ice and snow; for the marching sun, that spite of these short winter days has already turned northward again, bringing nearer every day the coming of another spring; for the worldwide understandings that have led all mankind to turn over together the completed record of the old year, and with one mind and heart to begin together the adventurous story of the new.

We pray now for a new frame of mind and heart, that shall make this truly a new year for us all. Help us, under the crusted surface of our old traditions and conventions, to recognize Thee at work about us and within us for the making of a better world. Strengthen our impatience with the old injustices and brutalities that exploit and embitter our common life, with the old prejudices and fears and rivalries that divide and so overcome our common weal. In these dark midwinter days of discouragement and dread, lighten our faces and our hearts with new vision and hope of the day when universal peace shall lie like a shaft of light across the world, and life more abundant yield its richest fruitage to satisfy the hunger and thirst of all mankind. Let the spirit of Christ take such possession of our own minds and hearts that we ourselves shall be prophets of that new day and builders toward that new world, with its light already on our faces and its love in our hearts.

Especially we remember in our prayer today all those on whom the shadows have fallen so darkly that they find it hard to see light anywhere; who are still in the wintry grip of the old grief, the old weaknesses, the unchanged circumstances, the old failures, with which they have lived so long. Shine into their hearts and into ours this very hour, O God of light and love; and so transform us by the renewing of our minds, that the familiar scenes and the common days shall be changed for us all into the beginning, not only of a new year but of a new life—the Life that maketh all things new. Amen.

God's grace, will be consummated. Religion is for them both heritage and adventure. They recall the three hundred trumpets that sent the Midianites flying; they take courage in the recollection of Gideon's victory by his persistent trumpeters. More than any brave memory, however, is their invincible faith in the ultimate triumph of their living Lord whom death could not impede. "The kingdoms of this world *shall* become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

Stuart Chase concluded his survey of the "New Deal" by asking, "Why should Russians have all the fun?" Why, indeed? If we would listen, we too would hear the higher music calling us to share in the thrill of building a new world here and now. Above the discordant and defeatist voices of faint-hearts there sounds the trumpet of victory. Never can we hear that summons while we remain seated in our comfortable chairs about the fires of a purely individualistic religion. It is in the lifting up of our arms on behalf of the world-beaten and broken, the maimed and wounded, that our own spirits shall be uplifted and made strong. "Young man! young woman!" urged Wendell Phillips, "Attach yourself in your youth to some unpopular cause, and grow up strong in its service!"

If you seek such causes, look around you. The abolition of war, the conquest of poverty, the reconstruction of the social order after the pattern given to us on the mount, the Christianizing of Christianity—such causes await determined young comrades of the Comrade Christ! Losing oneself in such causes, one not only finds oneself re-made and re-empowered, but one discovers the secret of the victors. For

> He whom a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of doubting,
> For mist and the blowing of winds and the mouthing of words he scorns.
> No sinuous speech and smooth he hears, but a knightly shouting,
> And never comes darkness down, yet he greeteth a million morns.

Wherefore, O timid ones, hear the trumpets sounding in the morning, and

> . . . rouse from your perilous ease, to your sword and your shield;
> Your ease is the ease of the cattle.
> Hark, hark, where the bugles are calling:
> Out to some field—
> Out to some battle!

III.

Is not this sense of the essential rightness of their cause the reason why the valiant of every age are the supremely happy spirits? God would vindicate their faith; joy always cometh with the morning. Tertullian asserts that he and most of the early converts to Christianity were won by watching how Christians lived and died. "There was something infectiously joyous about them. Hope shone in them with a steady flame. When you met one, you had a curious sense that there was someone else present with him from whom he received his directions, and to whom he referred his opinions so that you went away feeling that you had not met one but two." In the second book of the Kings, the chronicler describes a significant coronation in these words: "And the guard stood, every man with his weapons, round about the king. . . . in the temple . . . and he brought forth the king's son and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they clapped their hands and said, God save the king. . . . and all the people of the land rejoiced and blew trumpets."

Even a staunch democrat, with little monarchist sympathies, might agree with me that such imagery could be employed to describe a high religious experience. Here in our "temple" we meet week by week. Surely we have known that the king's son is among us, and that he has wrought in us that which attests our own potential kingliness and queenliness of character. The vision of what the Galilean became reminds us that accessible to us also is "the power to become" sons and daughters of the Most High. Why then are we so easily depressed, so Quixotic in our demeanor as if we waged a hopeless warfare? "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" here and now! "Set the trumpet to thy mouth" and rejoice in the Lord always. In a delightful essay, McEwan Lawson tells of a converted burglar who became a bugler in a Salvation Army band. He was set to play "one of these trumpets which wind five times in circling serpent folds about the player's shoulders. Each night he spoilt the hymns by blowing so hard that all the other instrumentalists were drowned. For a little under rebuke his ways would mend, but at last one Sunday night amid some stirring hymns, he passed all bounds. 'I am sorry,' he said, 'sorry. I started carefully remembering what you had said, but then the old trouble started again, for as the hymns went on and spoke of all that God had done for me, I felt, as I have always felt before, that the very least I could do was to show His praise by blowing this blooming trumpet straight.'" Ah, you can have the world for a song like that! "Set the trumpet to thy mouth!" Are you not now in the companionship of

The FEBRUARY issue of The Christian Century Pulpit will be the

DISCIPLES' NUMBER

and will include sermons by Rev. George H. Combs, Country Club Christian church, Kansas City, Mo.; Rev. George A. Campbell, Union Avenue Christian church, St. Louis; Rev. A. W. Fortune, Central Christian church, Lexington, Ky.; Rev. Burris A. Jenkins, Linwood Community church, Kansas City, Mo.; Rev. Edgar De Witt Jones, Central Woodward Christian church, Detroit, Mich.; Rev. Raphael H. Miller, National City church, Washington, D. C. and Rev. P. H. Welshimer, First Christian church, Canton, O.

These men have been selected by the ministers of the Disciples of Christ to represent their denomination in this special number.

him in whose presence there is fulness of joy forevermore?

At long last, it will mean much to have heard the music of Christ's name, and to have its melody accompanying us as we venture forth into the Land of New Victories. Some time ago, a noble teacher and a great soul passed on, when Dr. W. Cosby Bell entered into the unseen. A teacher in one of the seminaries of the Protestant Episcopal church, his influence over students was immeasurable. His wife, remembering his oft-expressed wish to face death while still conscious, told him the end was near. As part of his final conversation, he sent, through her, this valedictory to his students:

> Tell the boys that I've grown surer of God every year of my life, and I've never been so sure as I am right now. Why, it's all so! It's a fact—it's a dead certainty. I'm so glad to find that I haven't the least shadow of shrinking or uncertainty. I've been preaching and teaching these things all my life, and I'm so interested to find that all we've been believing and hoping is so. I've always thought so, and now that I'm right up against it, I know. . . . Tell them I say 'good-bye'—they've been a joy to me. I've had more than any man that ever lived, and life owes me nothing. I've had work I loved, and I've lived in a beautiful place among congenial friends. I've had love in its highest form and I've got it forever. . . . I can see now that death is just the smallest thing—just an incident—that it means nothing.

"So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."

We shall build on!
We shall build on!
On through the cynic's scorning,
On through the coward's warning,
On through the cheat's suborning,
We shall build on!

Firm on the Rock of Ages,
City of saints and sages,
Laugh while the tempest rages,
We shall build on!

Christ, though my hands be bleeding,
Fierce though my flesh be pleading,
Still let me see Thee leading,
Let me build on!

Till through death's cruel dealing,
Brain wrecked and reason reeling,
I hear Love's trumpets pealing,
And I pass on.

Timely Verse

The Old Year

WHAT is the Old Year? 'Tis a book
On which we backward sadly look,
Not willing quite to see it close,
For leaves of violet and rose
Within its heart are thickly strewn,
Marking love's dawn and golden noon;
And turned-down pages, noting days
Dimly recalled through Memory's haze;
And tear-stained pages, too, that tell
Of starless nights and mournful knell
Of bells tolling through trouble's air
The De Profundis of despair—
The laugh, the tear, the shine, the shade,
All 'twixt the covers gently laid;
No uncut leaves; no page unscanned;
Close it and lay it in God's hand.

CLARENCE URMY.

A Way to a Happy New Year

TO leave the old with a burst of song,
To recall the right and forgive the wrong;
To forget the thing that binds you fast
To the vain regrets of the year that's past;
To have the strength to let go your hold
Of the not worth while of the days grown old,
To dare go forth with a purpose true,
To the unknown task of the year that's new;
To help your brother along the road
To do his work and lift his load;
To add your gift to the world's good cheer,
Is to have and to give a Happy New Year.

ROBERT BREWSTER BEATTIE.

The New Year

I AM the New Year, and I come to you pure and unstained,
Fresh from the hand of God.
Each day, a precious pearl to you is given
That you must string upon the silver thread of Life.
Once strung can never be unthreaded, but stays
An undying record of your faith and skill.
Each golden, minute link you then must weld into the chain of hours
That is no stronger than its weakest link.
Into your hands is given all the wealth and power
To make your life just what you will.
I give to you, free and unstinted, twelve glorious months
Of soothing rain and sunshine golden;
The days for work and rest, the nights for peaceful slumber.
All that I have I give with love unspoken.
All that I ask—*you keep the faith unbroken!*

J. D. TEMPLETON.

Resolve

TO keep my health!
To do my work!
To live!
To see to it I grow and gain and give!
Never to look behind me for an hour!
To wait in weakness and walk in power.
But always fronting onward toward the light
Always and always facing toward the right,
Robbed, starved, defeated, fallen, wide astray—
On with what strength I have
Back to the way!

CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN.

Preaching to Life Situations

By Harold W. Ruopp

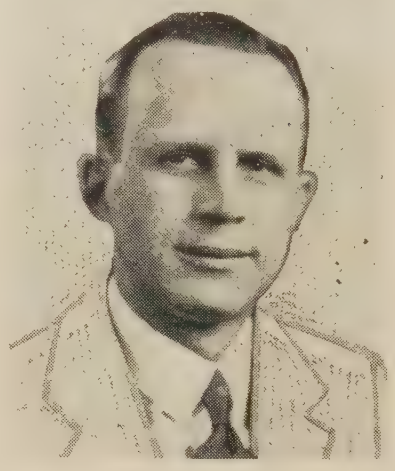
MANY readers of the Christian Century Pulpit will recall with delight the article by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick entitled "What is the Matter with Preaching?" which appeared in Harper's Magazine a few years ago. Dr. Fosdick defined what he means by problem preaching, or what I prefer to call the life situation approach to preaching. It was written out of a pulpit experience extending over many years, and accounts in a large measure for its author's remarkable success in dealing with people. Among other things Dr. Fosdick said:

"Every problem that the preacher faces thus leads back to one basic question: how well does he understand the thoughts and lives of his people? That he should know his gospel goes without saying, but he may know it ever so well and yet fail to get within reaching distance of anybody unless he intimately understands people, and cares more than he cares for anything else, what is happening inside of them. Preaching is wrestling with individuals over questions of life and death, and until that idea of it commands a preacher's mind and method, eloquence will avail him little and theology not at all."

● *Mere Guesswork Will Not Do*

Assuming that this statement of the case is true—and who can doubt it?—it is incumbent upon the preacher, if he is to preach vitally, to adopt the scientific attitude of mind, the essence of which is objectivity. Mere guesswork is not enough. Rather, by patient and painstaking study and observation, he must discover just what are the major situations which people are facing, and then in his pulpit ministry come to grips with those situations. Most, if not all, of his sermons will be built over the pattern: (1) We are here (the clear-cut articulation of any given situation); (2) How did we get here?; and (3) *How* do we get out of here? Number 3 is at once the most important, and the most difficult to deal with; that is why, one may presume, so many sermons stop short of it. Preaching never fulfills its true function until it begins to concern itself with "the way out"—with specific suggestions and methods that will help people face life more creatively and courageously, more winsomely and redemptively.

It is a sound principle to work upon, I am sure, that that which comes out of life fits back into life, and has a way of influencing it and molding it. The resources for preaching to life are finally in life itself. Abortive theologies and sterile philosophies result when one moves away from the arena of experience. Where then are the areas of greatest conflict and tension in life? Where are the "storm centers"? Where are the points where adjustments most need to be made?



Harold W. Ruopp

These are the questions which every preacher must face as he builds his preaching program.

● *What Are the People's Problems?*

For several years, students in my classes in "life situation preaching" have been at work attempting objectively to discover the outstanding questions, problems and difficulties which people face. The sources for this study have been twofold. In the first place, each student at the beginning of the course has been asked to write out and turn in from three to five specific situations in the lives of people with whom they are acquainted. Second, and even more important, those students who have had charges have made a questionnaire study in their respective churches. The question they ask of their people is this: What is the outstanding question (problem or difficulty) which you face in your thinking and living? ("If no such question presents itself, please write the word none.") To preserve anonymity, no signatures are requested.

Thus far about 2500 situations have been submitted, and so far as possible classified. The result has been the following syllabus which may prove of interest to readers of the Christian Century Pulpit. Before coming to it, however, two statements need to be made about it. For one thing, this list is not to be understood to exhaust *all* the life situations which people face. It is intended rather, upon the basis of our inductive study, to indicate the *major* life situations. Then, too, the categories here noted are by no means mutually exclusive. Life cannot be locked up in neat logical molds.

A Syllabus of Major Life Situations

I. The Individual and His Inner Self.

1. Misfortune (involving the problem of evil)—Natural evils, accidents, suicide, sickness, suffering, economic catastrophes, with their deprivation of loved ones, property or physical freedom, and resulting often in religious doubts and uncertainties, and moral and spiritual decay.

2. Thwarted Ambitions—due to physical misfortunes, family responsibilities, lack of educational opportunity, the struggle to make a living, and resulting in personal maladjustments and religious problems.

3. Moral Problems—arising from inadequate conceptions of religion, ethical laws and moral values; wrong attitudes, such as jealousy, greed, pride, selfishness, hate, anger, conflicting desires; anti-social behavior; alcoholism; sex; etc.

4. Personal Feelings of Sin and Guilt (real or imagined)—resulting from questionable behavior, inner conflicts, and conflict with the moral standards of society.

5. Personality Disturbances—arising from various causes, and resulting in such problems as the feeling of futility, the sense of frustration, personal inadequacy to meet life, the inferiority feeling, the feeling of insecurity, of fear, of anxiety, of suspicion; the unwillingness to forgive; the sense of being alone in the world, unneeded, unwanted.

6. Adjustments and Decisions Regarding the Major Issues of Life—What shall my life work be? Whom shall I marry? What shall I do with the Christ way of life? etc.

7. Educational Needs—such as the expanding of the individual's interests and horizons, the use of leisure time, the problem of recreation, the cultivation of the art of living, etc.

8. Indifference to Religious living—either personal or social, or both.

II. The Individual in His Relationship to the Family.

1. Conflict Between Personalities—parent vs. parent; parent vs. children; dependents, "in laws," etc.
2. Economic Difficulties—unemployment of the bread-winner; loss of property, etc., with consequent loss of family morale and self-respect.
3. Marriage—Preparation for marriage, inadequate conceptions of married life, attaining happiness in marriage.
4. Divided Homes—on religious and sectarian issues, the problem of children, sex relations, and other causes.
5. Broken Homes—separation, divorce, infidelity, desertion, death of members, etc.
6. The Whole Problem of Child Training.
7. Religion in the Home.

III. The Individual in His Relationship to Larger Social Groups (the Community, Society, and the Church)

1. Inadequate Social Philosophy—caused by, and resulting in, a lack of social vision and a sense of social responsibility.
2. Social Injustice—social inequality, unemployment, the exploitation of human personality for personal gain, the exploitation of natural resources, the conflict of Christian idealism with the profit motive of modern business—and the religious and moral problems that arise from these and others.
3. Personal and Group Conflicts—animosities, misunderstanding.
4. Misunderstanding and Conflicts among the Races.
5. Nationalism and Internationalism—war and peace.
6. Problems of Christian Citizenship.
7. Conflicting Loyalities—the church and fraternal orders, the D.A.R., the American Legion, etc.
8. Problems Relating to the Church as Such—Inner church strifes; why denominationalism; the task of the church, etc.

IV. The Individual in His Relationship to God and the Universe.

1. The Meaning of Life—the problem of existence.
2. Intellectual and Emotional Conflicts—with respect to the problems presented by religion; for example, (a) God—What is he like and how may we find him? (b) The person of Jesus, especially his significance for contemporary life. (c) The meaning of prayer—techniques for praying. (d) The basis of belief in immortality. (e) Science and religion. (f) Practical materialism and Christianity (humanism).

● *A Report of Findings*

Of the 2500 situations studied, approximately 1600 have come from people in 50 churches of several denominations. Forty-six per cent of these have answered the question put to them (above) by writing "none." It may be assumed that many of these as a matter of fact do have problems or difficulties but either do not wish to state them or cannot articulate them ("Something's wrong, but I don't know what.") Others have no problems since their lives are integrated on a low intellectual, moral and spiritual level. A third group—presumably a very small one—have had their "conflicts resolved" and their difficulties met, hence can truthfully write "none."

Of the group stating specific questions or difficulties, 47.5 per cent of the answers received come within General Situation I—The Individual and His Inner Self. Within this group, the order of greatest frequency is as follows—to use the Arabic figures in the syllabus—5, 6, 3, 7, 1, 4, 2, 8.

Under Group II come 23.6 per cent—the order being 2, 1, 6, 4, 3, 7, 5.

General Situation III claims 15.1 per cent—the order here being as follows: 2, 1, 6, 3, 8, 5, 7, 4. Finally, 13.6 per cent of the situations best identify themselves under General Situation IV. Here the preponderance of questions have to do with God (especially his character), Jesus, immortality, and prayer—and in that order.

● *Bearing Upon Preaching*

This study, and the syllabus which has grown out of it, has certain great values. In the first place, it indicates at what points the problems seem most acute, and where preaching must center. More data (for the study is still in progress) may change the figures, though the guess may be ventured that further investigation will only confirm what has gone before. In the second place, the syllabus furnishes a guide for a balanced preaching program. All of us who are in the preaching ministry are aware of the constant danger of overworking certain areas and completely ignoring others. Student pastors, and others, are finding it worth while to check their homiletic efforts against this "guide" to discover what domains they are failing to enter.

Once more, this syllabus gives us a principle of selection for our reading and study. There are stimulating books to be read at every point. Finally, those of us who are struggling (the word is well chosen!) to find an adequate, yet simple, filing system may find a key here. By using the headings noted in the syllabus, and as many more as experience proves necessary, we have at least a workable framework of what may turn out to be an effective filing system. At least such a system would have a vital relationship to the people of the parish.

(As indicated above, this presentation is not intended to cover all the life situations which perplex people. The author of this article would be deeply appreciative if its readers would share with him their reactions as to the adequacy, or inadequacy, of the syllabus here suggested, and further submit any suggestions of their own which would aid toward a more complete understanding of the whole life situation problem, and a more effective handling by ministers of such "situations.")

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Jesus of Nazareth, without money and arms, conquered more millions than Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed and Napoleon; without science and learning, he shed more light on things human and divine than all the philosophers and scholars combined; without the eloquence of the school, he spoke words of life such as were never spoken before, nor since, and produced effects which [illegible] beyond the reach of orator [illegible]et; without writing a single line, [illegible] has set more pens in motion and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, works of art, learned volumes, and sweet songs of praise than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times. Born in a manger and crucified as a malefactor, he now controls the destinies of the civilized world, and rules a spiritual empire which embraces one-third of the inhabitants of the globe.

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WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE

HAVING spent most of his mature life as a Baptist minister—in Meriden, Conn., Milwaukee, Wis., and Yonkers, N. Y.—Rev. ROBERT A. ASHWORTH became editor of the Baptist in 1930. On the merger of that publication with The Christian Century he became a contributing editor of that weekly, and also accepted the post of educational secretary of the National Conference of Jews and Christians. Dr. Ashworth's sermon in this issue looks forward to the celebration, on February 24, of Brotherhood day, which is sponsored by the National Conference.

Rev. ALLAN KNIGHT CHALMERS *succeeded* Dr. Charles E. Jefferson at the famous Broadway Tabernacle, New York, about five years ago. Earlier pastorates were in West Springfield, Mass, New Haven, Conn., and Buffalo, N. Y. Dr. Chalmers testifies that ten months' war service overseas changed the direction of his life and led him into the ministry; he had for a time been a teacher and had intended to devote his life to educational work. He received his A.B. from Johns Hopkins university, and his B.D. from Yale divinity school. Mr. Chalmers was ordained in the Congregational ministry in 1922.

Receiving his M.A. degree from the University of Texas, Rev. CHARLES H. HEIMSATH taught in that university for four years. He pursued theological studies in Yale divinity school and was there awarded his B.D. degree. Mr. Heimsath has been in the ministry for eight years—at the First Baptist church, Bridgeport, Conn., and the First Baptist church, Evanston, Ill., where he now ministers. Mr. Heimsath is a member of the board of the American Baptist home mission society, and is chairman of the program committee of the 1935 Northern Baptist convention to be held in Colorado Springs.

Rev. BERYL D. COHON *is associate rabbi* of Temple Israel in Boston, and lecturer on Judaism and the Old Testament in Boston university school of religious education and social service. Rabbi Cohon is the author of two books: "Introduction to Judaism" and "Ethics of the Rabbis."

After twelve years as pastor of the Presbyterian church in Highland Park, Ill., Rev. FRANK FITT went to Grosse Point Memorial church, at Grosse Point Farms, Mich. Mr. Fitt is a graduate of Williams college and completed his divinity work at Union seminary; he pursued graduate studies also at Union and Columbia.

For a number of years Rev. DAVID A. MACLENNAN has been minister of Emmanuel church, United Church of Canada, of Montreal. He received his education at the University of Manitoba, the Manitoba theological college and Harvard college. For brief periods he was pastor at Hyde Park Presbyterian church, Boston, and Faith Presbyterian church, Baltimore.

Rev. CHARLES W. GILKEY *is dean of the* chapel at the University of Chicago.

Rev. HAROLD W. RUOPP *is professor of* preaching in Andover-Newton theological school, Newton Centre, Mass.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

E. MARCELLUS NESBITT, First United Presbyterian, Columbus, O. "Under Sentence to Live." 1 Kings 19:5—"An angel touched (Elijah), and said unto him, Arise and eat."

JOHN A. BLAIR, Presbyterian, Chambersburg, Pa. "Creating Our Own Darkness." I John 2:11—"He who hates his brother is in darkness, he walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, for the darkness has blinded his eyes" (Moffatt).

HAROLD G. GAUNT, Olivet Presbyterian, Atlantic City, N. J. "The Pageantry of Triumph." II Cor. 2:14—"Wherever I go, thank God, he makes my life a constant pageant of triumph" (Moffatt).

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

.....
Title of sermon

.....
Text used (Write out the text)

.....
Name of minister

.....
Name of church

.....
Address

R. H. MILLER, Manchester college, North Manchester, Ind. "Living With Yourself." Gal. 6:1—"Let each of you look to himself."

GEORGE E. OWEN, Christian, Tazewell, Va. "Crumbs." Luke 16:21—"And desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table."

CLYDE W. ROBBINS, First Baptist, Westboro, Mass. "The Great Illusion." Matt. 15:13—"Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."

OTTO LIEBNER, Bethlehem Methodist, Evansville, Ind. "A Call to Mental Preparedness." I Peter 1:13a—"Therefore, prepare your minds for action" (Goodspeed).

GERALD F. RICHARDSON, Advent Christian (college church), Aurora, Ill. "A Troublesome God." Psalm 77:3—"I remembered God and was troubled."

FREDERICK P. FREEMAN, First Baptist, Somerville, Mass. "Wanted—Pioneers!" 2 Tim. 2:3—"Suffer hardship . . . as a good soldier."

JOHN M. ALLISON, Congregational, Berea, O. "New Worlds to Conquer." Heb. 2:8—"Now we see not yet all things put under him."

F. E. DAVIDSON, Austin Boulevard Christian, Oak Park, Ill. Four sermons on God. (1) "God and Me." "God is love." (2) "God and My Failure." "He restoreth my soul." (3) "God and My Sins." "He forgiveth all my iniquities." (4) "God and My Ills." "He healeth all my diseases."

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

AS SURE as fate, the future holds a conflict between Christianity and nationalism in the United States. It may be more serious, more tragic than the conflict now being waged in Germany. The federal supreme court's decision in the case of the two conscientious objectors against compulsory military training in California's state university raises appreciably the height of the legal rampart which American nationalism is steadily erecting against religious freedom. Beginning with the Schwimmer case, followed by the Macintosh and Bland cases, the supreme court has now in the R.O.T.C. case made it plain that America has undergone a legal change of heart from the days of the founding fathers, and that religious liberty in this country is a hollow reminiscence. Other cases in the lower federal courts, such as that of Mrs. Graber in Ohio, Rev. T. F. Rutledge Beale in Minnesota and Rev. T. S. King in Louisiana indicate clearly that a body of legal precedents is being built up which can only be overcome by new legislation. The likelihood of such legislation in the present temper of the nation, is highly remote. The Christian church will do well, therefore, to take a realistic view of its situation. The relation of state and church in the United States is no longer one of tacit mutuality. They are in conflict. That conflict can be kept from becoming serious only by the drastic revision of the nation's policy or by the cowardly inertia of the Christian church. It is important for all Christian leaders publicly to discuss in pulpit, Bible class and special groups, the issue that is involved. A good example is set by the Houston, Texas, ministerial alliance which drew up, adopted and published an extended statement voicing the Christian protest against the supreme court's denial of religious liberty in both the R.O.T.C. and the naturalization cases. This sort of thing should be done by local churches and Christian groups of all kinds throughout the land.

America Repeals Religious Liberty

The Book of the Month

RELIGION RENOUNCES WAR, *by Walter W. Van Kirk. Willett, Clark & Company, $2.00.*

THIS BOOK came to my attention in the hour of a real need. I was preparing an address—three addresses, in fact—on certain aspects of war and peace and needed exact quotations from recent pronouncements of the churches. Instead of searching through the files of the religious press like hunting for a needle in a haystack, I opened this book and behold, there were the materials I needed, all gathered and organized, so that it seemed almost like plagiarism to use them. But I did—and unblushingly! Mr. Van Kirk has performed a service of great value for every minister, teacher and public speaker who deals with the problem of Christianity and war. And what an impressive and heartening thing it is that the churches have done in the past decade and a half? We do not fully realize the strength and volume of Christian opinion on this issue until it is concentrated within the covers of a single volume. The author has not merely made a collection of official utterances—he has also made an interpretation of the whole movement of the Christian conscience against war. Here are his chapter headings: "The Churches Part Company With Caesar," "The Churches Speak Their Mind on the Cause and Cure of War," "The Churches Demand Drastic Reduction of Armaments," "The Churches and the Traffic in Arms," "The Churches Champion the Rights of Conscience," "The Churches of the World Combat the War System." In the chapters on the rights of conscience the author failed to include the united action of some thirty religious periodicals of the country on the Macintosh case. I suggest that each reader go back and clip that editorial manifesto from the files of his denominational paper and paste it in the back of this book. That will make the story pretty nearly complete. This book will put a girdle of courage around the loins of every man who stands up to bear his testimony against war.

A Thought for the Month

AS I GO among the churches, I find that one of the most persistent criticisms of ministers is that we harp too much on one string. I agree with this criticism, and sympathize with those patient souls who make it. I also sympathize with the minister against whom the criticism applies. These are hard days for the conscientious preacher who is determined to keep his own inner integrity against the temptation to mouth the platitudes of orthodoxy. If he is a "liberal," he tends to irritate people by persistently sounding the party note of liberalism. If he is social minded he harps on the one string of the social gospel. The effect is to draw to his church those who are already persuaded and to alienate all others by ceaseless iteration and irritation. I believe in the principle of catholicity in preaching, as opposed to intellectual sectarianism or narrow partisanship. To be catholic is our highest duty. We are too narrow in our squeamish devotion to the principle of consistency. In true catholicity many inconsistencies are reconciled. I am a liberal myself, but I am also a worshiper, and I would surely tire of a minister who insisted on preaching "liberalism" week in and week out. As a radical believer in the social gospel, I doubt if I could endure to listen Sunday after Sunday to a certain type of social gospel advocate to whom the Christian church is hardly more than a sort of political party. I have other needs besides those which can be satisfied by direct participation in social action. And the social minded minister will be able to enlist me in social action far more ardently if he keeps my other needs in mind and speaks to my condition. The only cure for harping on one string is for the preacher to become aware of this his catholic responsibility.

Harping on One String

Charles Clayton Morrison

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